

Annex B

The Chairperson's Address

Ms Lim Li Kok

Address by Chairperson 2014 AGM

Introduction

1. In 2000 when I and Rama became active in the Book Council we set up informal Advisory team to draw up a strategic plan, set up a Secretariat and get funding support for the Council. Even at that time The Council's main objective was ambitious - to develop Singapore into an international centre for writers and publishers of Asian Content. Accordingly with Funds from the Lee Foundation and Shaw Foundation we set out to achieve the objective.

What has been done

2. We developed programmes in the following six areas over the past ten years:
 - a) **Three Festivals:** Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC), Singapore International Story Telling Festival (SISF), and All In! Young Writers Media Festival (YWMF) which focuses on content for Young Adults.
 - b) **Capability Development:** The Book Council set up a training arm, the Centre for the Literary Arts and Publishing (CLAP) which later was upgraded to an Academy of Literary Arts and Publishing - to organise courses and workshops on reading, storytelling, writing, and publishing.
 - c) **Literary Awards:** The Singapore Literature Prize (SLP), Singapore Book Award (SBA), Scholastic Asian Book Award (SABA), Hedwig Anuar Children's Book Award (HABA), The Scholastic Picture Book Award and SEA Write Awards. These awards honoured and promoted the literary talents of Singaporeans and Asians. These awards have grown bigger
 - d) **The Singapore Writers Centre:** This is an Advisory service which the Council provides to the writers and publishing community.
 - e) **Multilingual programmes:** Creative Writing, Publishing and Editing programmes (in Chinese, Malay and Tamil), which focuses on writing in languages other than the official language, English.
 - f) **Community Outreach activities:** Throughout the year the Book Council organises a host of free activities/events aimed at encouraging writing efforts and fostering a greater understanding of the writing and the publishing process, through talks, forums, book launches and book club activities.

Funding

3. As at July 2014 our staff had grown from one in 2000 to ten and our budget from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000 in the same period. Besides the original funders (Lee & Shaw Foundations) we

now received funding support from NAC, MDA, SICCC, QBE, SingTel, Scholastic and private corporations.

The Future

4. To consolidate the Council's achievement and to prepare for its future the Council accomplished the following:

a) Amended the Constitution

- i) Revised, strengthened and updated the constitution to set up a high profile permanent **Advisory Board** to Provide strategic direction, access to funds and relevant agencies.
- ii) To comply with all laws and codes of conduct in Singapore that are applicable, including the **Code of Corporate Governance** by the Registrar of Societies, and the Code of Governance for Charities and Institute of Public Character (IPC).
- iii) To expand the Council Membership to include various categories of membership to enable key people from the industry and the profession to serve in the Executive Committee of the Council

b) Council Secretariat

Expanded and strengthen the **Council Secretariat** to 12 staff. Appointed career professionals and provided for succession plan. This was necessary to meet the demands of Council's expanded responsibilities and to achieve greater strides in the years ahead

Your Support and Involvement

5. We are turning towards you for your continuing advice and support to establish the Book Council as the key player in the development of the literary arts and publishing in Singapore and the region.
6. I thank you for your support all these years and look forward to your continuing support for the next Committee. I also would like to thank the Secretariat of its outstanding work especially Mr Ramachandran for his dedication, diligence and leadership.
7. The Book Council is heading towards a new era with a new committee and a constitution that has been amended. The Book Council would be able to serve the literary and publishing community more effectively and achieve greater results in the future.
8. I will now hand over the Meeting to the Executive Director to conduct rest of the proceedings.

Ms Lim Li Kok
Chairperson
31 July 2014